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ABSTRACT

Although there is no single measure of the degree of integration of the children of immigrants, individual trends and indicators can be interpreted to depict the status and opportunities of young foreigners residing in Germany. Although the standard of school-leaving certificates rose, the number of young foreigners is still disproportionately high at lower grade and special schools and correspondingly low at junior secondary and high schools. The trend toward higher-level school graduation ended in 1992. Less than 39 percent of all foreigners take up schooling in the so-called "dual system" of post-school and adult education compared with 64 percent of their German peers. Reasons for the disparity include the following: not being aware of the dual system, poor command of German, discrimination by employers in awarding traineeships, and the shortage of training and apprenticeship facilities. The employment focus has shifted away from industry to the service sector, in particular hotels and catering. The proportion of unskilled foreign employees dropped from 25 to 16 percent, of semiskilled workers from 45 to 39 percent. Only 19 percent earned a living as skilled workers in 1984; their number was up to 23 percent by 1995. The proportion of foreign white-collar workers at basic level increased from 4 to 8 percent and of middle to senior level from 3 to 10 percent. Unemployment of all foreigners was 13.9 and of Germans was 9.5 percent in 1996, and 1 year later, the respective totals were 12.6 and 8.7. (YLB)

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The Young Generation Takes Root - Foreigners in Germany II

By

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Summary of Contents

Nearly one million young foreigners live in Germany. Unlike their parents, who worked and lived for decades in isolation in German society, the children have become increasingly integrated in the native lifestyle of Germany. Their education level is rising. Many obtain better jobs and higher earnings than their parents. But, says Dr. Helga Herrmann - an expert at the Institute of German Industry - the disproportionately high unemployment rate among immigrants remains a problem. In the following article, which first appeared in the Cologne institute's information service (iwd 44/1998), Dr. Herrmann outlines the findings of a study* she made of the process of integration among young foreigners living in Germany.

Note:

*A more detailed account
of how "Foreigners in
Germany" live and work is
contained in the BASIS-
INFO of the same title.
(BI 17-1997 - published in
October 1997)*

* Helga Herrmann: "Junge Ausländer in Deutschland - integriert oder ausgegrenzt?"; IW Cologne contributions to Gesellschafts-und Bildungspolitik No. 228, Cologne 1998, 32 pages, DM 11.90

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Workers recruited from the Mediterranean countries in the 1950s and 1960s have left their imprint everywhere in Germany. It's impossible not to see their contribution to music, literature and gastronomy. Many branches of the economy could not have done without them



Immigrants and their children and grandchildren from Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia have also enriched youth culture in Germany. More than 680,000 of the almost one million 18-to-25-year-old foreigners living here are the offspring of recruited immigrants, referred to here until recent years as "Gastarbeiter" (guest workers).

What are life and work in Germany like for this young generation? There's no valid single measure of their degree of integration. Integration actually means "reinstatement of unity" or "incorporation into a greater whole" - rather empty phrases, difficult to substantiate.

But it is possible to interpret individual trends and indicators that describe the status and opportunities of young foreigners residing in Germany:

Schooling

All's well that begins well - this slightly modified idiom aptly describes the lot of a young foreigner in Germany. Education and training form the essential springboard in a society in which people define themselves by how they earn a living.

In performance at school, the present-day 15-to-24-year-old foreigners have moved ahead of their predecessors, as can be seen from the "Representative Survey '95" (also see graphic "School-leaving Certificate"):



Depending on nationality, only between 9 percent and just under 14 percent of the young foreigners failed to obtain a school-leaving certificate in 1995 - compared to between 33 percent and 58 percent ten years earlier.

Of almost 86,800 foreign school pupils who ended their basic schooling in 1996, around 17 percent had no certificate (Germany around 10 percent), while almost 39 percent obtained a junior high school certificate. More than 30 percent gained junior secondary school certificates and 14 percent qualified for university at high schools.

While the standard of school-leaving certificates rose, the number of young foreigners is still disproportionately high at lower-grade and special schools and correspondingly low at junior secondary and high schools. The trend toward higher-level school graduation ended in 1992.

Learning for careers

The generally positive trend in school-leaving standards continues into the occupational learning sphere. In 1995, almost 70 percent of the young foreigners entered career training after leaving school while 15 percent took up employment straight from school.

However, the picture looks far less pleasing when the statistics are extended to include nationalities not covered by the representative survey carried out for the Federal Labour Ministry. Using this yardstick, less than 39 percent of all foreigners take up schooling in the so-called "dual system" of post-school and adult education. This compares with some 64 percent of their German peers. There are reasons for the disparity:

National characteristics often cause a process of concentration in a small selection of career categories. Many parents of young foreigners are not aware of the "dual system" of career schooling. It also said that poor command of German, discrimination by employers in awarding traineeships and the shortage of training and apprenticeship facilities are further obstacles.

About 116,000 young foreigners began career training in 1966 - 52,000 of them in the manual trades alone and a further 47,000 in industry and the commercial sector (see graphic "Trainees").

Between seven and eight percent of apprenticeships and traineeships in these branches are held by young foreigners. A higher proportion (nine percent) is reported by the so-called "free professions" such as doctors and lawyers which, while gaining in significance, still account for only around 15,000 youngsters from immigrant families.

With regard to greater equality of opportunity, one trend is particularly welcome: the proportion of young foreign females rose from 35.8 percent in 1995 to 37 percent in 1996, coming closer to the 40 percent ratio of their German counterparts.

Foreign trainees: Manual trades preferred

	in 1,000s	in percentage of all trainees
Manual trades	52	8.3
Industry and commerce	47	6.7
Independent professions	15	9.0
Domestic science	1	4.1
Public services	1	2.7
Agriculture	1	1.6
Total	116	7.3

Status: 1996. Original data from Fed. Statistics Office, DIW
Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft, Cologne

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Employment

Unlike previous years and in contrast to the "first generation" of immigrants solicited for employment in Germany, the employment focus has shifted away from industry to the service sector, in particular hotels and catering. The service branch in western Germany now gives employment to more than 34 percent of foreigners aged from 20 to 24; the total is even higher in the five new states of eastern Germany - 50 percent. If only slowly, young persons of foreign origin are thus following the trend among their German peers.

On the other hand, the corresponding figures in industry are around 32 percent in western Germany and just below nine percent in the east - markedly lower than in the case of their compatriots in the 45-to-49 years age bracket - almost 45 percent in the west and 30 percent in the east.

Career status

Here, too, there's been a swing to more senior positions, as shown by a comparison between 1984 and 1995:

The proportion of unskilled foreign employees dropped from 25 to 16 percent, of the semi-skilled from 45 to 39 percent. Where only 19 percent earned a living as skilled workers in 1984, their number was up to 23 percent by 1995. The proportion of foreign "white collar"

workers at basic level increased - from four to eight percent - and of middle to senior-level from three to 10 percent.

As to equal opportunity in this sector: female foreigners now have better access to middle and senior level jobs (32 percent) than their male competitors (18 percent). But the proportion of unskilled foreign female workers is almost four times higher (67 percent) compared to that of German women (18 percent)

Income

As a result of better schooling and more seniority, foreign employees in Germany are also earning better wages and salaries. The average gross monthly pay of employed persons rose from DM 2,400 in 1984 to DM 3,430 in 1995. But this still left them well behind the 55 percent rise for German employees.

Unemployment

When the survey was carried out, 65,800 foreigners aged from 20 to 24 years were registered unemployed; this was 13.9 percent of all foreigners on the jobless register in Germany at the end of September 1996. The jobless rate for the corresponding German age group was 9.5 percent; one year later, the respective totals were 12.6 percent and 8.7 percent.

Thanks to their willingness to take on jobs unpopular among Germans, unemployed foreign residents are often back in employment fairly soon - mainly in the building industry, hotels and catering and the laundry trade.

So longterm unemployment is less a problem for young foreigners, more so for their elders. The young generation's main worry is that their jobs usually turn out to be unstable, with the result that unemployment is recurrent.

Crime

The crime rate is high among adolescents and young adults - but this has nothing to do with nationality, or at least not to the extent claimed by some populist commentators in Germany. Between 1993 and 1997, the number of adolescent Germans listed as crime suspects soared

by almost one third to 159,000. That of their non-German peers dropped by about one quarter to 85,500. The fact that the relatively large number of young foreigners in crime statistics is not rooted in foreign nationality is shown by two facts: the crime rate among young Germans who are poorly integrated in society is about the same for their foreign peers. And the crime rate among foreigners who are long established in Germany is lower than that among Germans.

Naturalisation

The 1995 representative survey revealed a high level of interest among foreigners in the 15-to-24 age group in acquiring German citizenship - much higher than among their elders over 45. To take the Turks as an example: almost 33 percent of Turkish youngsters but only 12 percent of the older generation said they would opt for a German passport.

IN-Press